

Zechariah 4:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you.

Analysis

The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it—Divine guarantee that the same person who began the work will complete it. The emphasis on *yādāyw* (יָדָיו, 'his hands') appearing twice stresses personal, physical labor—Zerubbabel wasn't a distant overseer but a hands-on builder. *Yissədū* (יִסְדּוּ, 'have laid the foundation') in the perfect tense confirms accomplished fact: the foundation was laid in 536 BC (Ezra 3:10). *Təbassā'nāh* (תְּבָسֵסָהּ, 'shall finish it') promises future completion, fulfilled in 516 BC (Ezra 6:15).

And thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you—The completion will vindicate Zechariah's prophetic authority. The formula 'you shall know' (*vəyāda'tā*, וְיָדָהְתָּ) indicates proof through fulfillment. When Zerubbabel finishes despite impossible odds, it will confirm that Zechariah spoke not his own speculation but as one 'sent' (*shəlāchani*, שָׁלַחֲנִי) by Yahweh. This echoes Jesus's claim: 'When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself' (John 8:28). Fulfilled prophecy validates divine commission. The mysterious 'me' sent by 'the LORD of hosts' again suggests the Angel of the LORD/pre-incarnate Christ (compare 2:8-11).

Historical Context

When Zechariah spoke (520 BC), the foundation had been laid 16 years earlier but no walls had risen. Skeptics abounded. Predicting completion required divine knowledge, not human optimism. When the temple was indeed finished four years later (516 BC), exactly as prophesied, it proved Zechariah's message came from God. This prophetic-fulfillment pattern strengthens faith: God's track record of fulfilled predictions guarantees future promises.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What unfinished works has God called you to that require faith He will bring to completion (Philippians 1:6)?
2. How does fulfilled prophecy (Zechariah's temple prediction) strengthen confidence in unfulfilled prophecies (Christ's return)?
3. Why does God emphasize 'his hands' both beginning and completing—what does this teach about perseverance?

Interlinear Text

פָּנָים הַבְּיִת הַזֶּה יְסִדָּה לְזְרֻבָּבֶל יְרֻבָּבֶל הַזֶּה
The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house
H3027 H2216 H3245 H1004 H2088

אַבְאָה וְתִּהְעָן הַיְהּוָה הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ
The hands shall also finish it and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts
H3027 H1214 H3045 H3588 H3068 H6635

שָׁלַם נִיְּלִיכְמָן
hath sent
H7971 H413

Additional Cross-References

Ezra 5:16 (Parallel theme): Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished.

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